

GARDEN: 49 raised plots serve gardeners young and old

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Sisters Community Garden since 2011, being a part of the community garden is something she loves.

“Fresh air,” she said. “Fresh vegetables. The camaraderie of other gardeners. Not to mention, when you need to work off some of life’s aggravations, this is a wonderful place to come for some peace and quiet.”

Other members such as garden President Penny Elson echoed Kathy’s sentiments: “I think that Sisters Community Garden is one of our community’s lesser-known treasures. What we have here, through the commitment and support of many lovers of the outdoors, is a super resource [for] anyone who loves to grow things or who simply enjoys the beauty of a garden.”

Established in 2012 on Barclay Drive next to Sisters Eagle Airport, Sisters Community Garden is a fenced-in garden area consisting of 49 raised plots, two additional beds at wheel-chair level, six shared plots for herbs, flowers and fruit, a “Back 40” plot for spreading vegetables such as pumpkin or zucchini. The garden also has extensive irrigation systems and a greenhouse about the size of a two-car garage.

“Every year, we do projects and events that either support the larger community of Sisters or are open to the public,” Elson said. “Such projects include growing food for the Kiwanis Food Bank, the Quilt Show in the Garden luncheon which is part of the Sisters Garden Tour and our late-summer Music in the Garden event.”

“In addition, besides

having your own plot,” Lawton added, “if a gardener has some special interest, such as growing raspberries or doing a flower plot, we often have the capability to accommodate that interest. One of our gardeners, Jerry Simmons, wanted us to explore having bee hives on the property because, as many people know, the bee population in the U.S. has seen some significant declines in recent years. Well, with the help of the Central Oregon Beekeeping Society, we got our first hive last spring and it was great. For whatever reason — we are always learning — our queen bee decided to ‘abdicate’ last year. But, what I hear, we have a new queen of Romanian extraction heading our way and, instead of one hive, we will have two this year.”

Another gardener offered her perspective: “The joy of this garden is that residents from around Sisters, both young, old, no matter the income or expertise, can get their hands in the soil and experience growing their own produce or flowers. I love working on my plot at the end of the day just before the sun is going down when, often, it is just you, a few other gardeners and the barn swallows enjoying the immense beauty we have here in Sisters.”

Although the 2018-2019 season has already started, Elson emphasizes that there are plots still available. Large plots (15-20 feet) are \$35. Small plots (under 15 feet) are \$25. Half a large bed is \$20. Although the raised beds in the greenhouse have already been designated to gardeners, all gardeners are free to use the greenhouse worktables and shelves for starting seeds or the east wall to grow plants in pots. No prior gardening experience is necessary. There are plenty of resources available at the garden to help the new or well-experienced get going.

Sign-up forms are available on the garden’s website.

The heart of the garden’s mission is to foster community.

“When my wife and I moved to Sisters in December 2015,” another gardener, named Ron, said, “we didn’t know anybody in town. Because we liked to garden, we figured that one of the best ways to get to know some of our neighbors was to join the garden. We did and ended up meeting all kinds of people.”

The garden is always open to the public.

“We simply ask that they don’t bring their dogs inside,” Lawton mentioned. “And, really important, that they lock the gate when they leave so that the deer don’t manage to make a raid!”

“And, really important... lock the gate ... so that the deer don’t manage to make a raid! — Bob Lawton

And those tomatoes, Bob? Standing inside the garden’s immense greenhouse, the result of the generosity of the Benson Family, Sisters Eagle Airport, the Rotary Club, City of Sisters, Sisters Garden Club and others, Bob offered a wry smile.

“Tomatoes actually grow quite well in here.”

To sign up for a plot or more information, visit www.sisterscommunitygarden.org.

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FAMILY DAY: Kids will have many opportunities for fun

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arena for a massive crowd photograph of a few hundred small clowns and a grown-up clown at the top of his rodeo game.

The first thousand kids at the rodeo will receive a special children’s rodeo program along with a pen for the quizzes and fun inside.

“We were exposed to this idea at a rodeo in Washington last summer,” said board

member Frank Jacobsen. “It seems like a good way for kids to learn about rodeo and about being a good citizen.”

All tickets are reserved, with children 12 and under free. Children need a ticket, which can be acquired when parents purchase theirs.

Sisters Rodeo will begin June 6 with Xtreme Bulls, followed by four rodeo performances June 8-10. For tickets and information, call the ticket hotline at 541-549-0121 or 1-800-827-7522, or visit the ticket office at 220 W. Cascade Ave. in Sisters. For information visit www.sistersrodeo.com.

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